

Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Project Profile **TEXAS** **(DRAFT)**

Updated: February 20, 2001

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Program

Focus Areas Funded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveillance and Epidemiology – Core Activities • Laboratory Capacity – Biological Agents • Health Alert Network
Texas has strengthened its capacity to respond to threats of bioterrorism by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEED TO REVIEW THE ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT • TDH leveraged \$3.78 million in state funds as a match to the CDC grant. Funds will go directly to local health departments for construction of a telecommunications network. • TDH contracts \$612,000 to LHD collaborative for construction of the Texas HAN. • GIS enabled alert system / broadcast fax installed at TDH. • TDH purchases Server and workstation to be used for web-applications for the HAN. • HAN and PAHO agree to share a directory of IP addresses to increase connectivity and health alert notification for Texas border area. • TDH is establishing partners with Universities and other agencies for assistance with distance learning, telemedicine, detection algorithms, sensors, and knowledge management tools. • HAN and WIC agree on collaborative use of equipment, and a distance learning studio. WIC satellite capability as backup communication system for HAN. • Texas Department of Health, Distance Learning Strategy group was formed to advise HAN project.
Project Year 2 Plans (August 31, 2000-August 30, 2001) include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and distributing disease reporting and surveillance manuals that will include information on select bioterrorism threat agents, • Continuing development of an interactive web form to aid physicians in the differential diagnosis of putative BT agents, • Building a fax-on-demand information system to aid in the dissemination of generic surveillance materials as well as bioterrorism related forms, • Continuing the testing and development of geographical information systems focused on outbreak detection and statistical reporting, • Improving public health information infrastructure by establishing a data warehouse and data management, data

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mining, query and communication system capable of accepting and housing health data from numerous sources which would improve overall data analysis and communication capabilities,

- Improving laboratory capacity to rapidly detect and characterize bioterrorism threat agents,
- Installing video-conferencing equipment in 8 regional offices to expand distance learning capabilities, and
- Providing local health departments with a virtual private network.
- Placing technical support specialists in regional offices to support HAN training and technical issues, using state money.
- Installing workstations with high-speed Internet connections at the local health department site where the emergency response coordinator exists. Value-added adaptations to the system include linking HAN with existing LHD LAN systems; providing the platform for other communication software, such as the Texas-Wide Integrated Client Encounter System (TWICES, the INPHO project).
- Creating a web tool that assists local authorities to create Bioterrorism-preparedness plans. It envisions a web site that includes model documents and details that should be part of the local assessment, planning, training, and preparedness actions.

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Anecdotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Due to the inception of federal funds to support HAN in year 1 the State of Texas provided an additional \$3.78 million in matching funds